We created this document with two ideas in mind: AI is undoubtedly now embedded in most parts of everyday life ("here to stay") and, in light of that, undisclosed AI usage holds no space in fandom. We believe readers deserve to make informed choices about the type of art they would like to engage with. In an ideal fandom space, AI usage to assist or generate fanworks would be disclosed up front.

However, undeniable proof of AI (Claude-generated) content is attached to the HTML of some works and can be found hidden in a number of well-known fanfics on Archive of Our Own, inside and outside the *Heated Rivalry* community.

A few necessary disclaimers here:

- The end goal is, and will always be, transparency.
- We do not condone targeted harassment, bullying and ostracization. Some of the authors in this document are writers we admired and, in some cases, considered friends. Some loudly opposed AI and encouraged friends and readers to rally against it publicly, only to use it under everyone's nose.
- **Nobody mentioned in this document should be villainized.** It is a human prerogative to make mistakes, be loud and wrong, and then do better.
- We are not asking for any works to be privated or taken down (AO3 does not, in fact, have an anti-AI policy). Instead, **we are asking that they be appropriately tagged** so that individuals can make informed choices on what they're supporting via reading, kudos, bookmarks, fic recs, video edits, fan art, and so on.

The absence of this particular Claude-generated HTML code in a fanfiction does not necessarily mean that the work is human. These examples are purely cases in which, whether due to inattention or hastiness, the original Claude formatting was copied and pasted directly into AO3's text editor without the filtering of writing platform tools (Google Docs, Pages, Word, etc.) or otherwise being removed by the user.

We are fans of *Heated Rivalry*, a TV show whose rapid popularity "surprised even TV executives"[1] and continues, arguably, to grow. This is the main reason why this document focuses on fanfics within that specific tag. This does not by any means suggest that the issue is limited to this specific fandom. A cursory search was enough to find similar Claude coding in other tags, including Stranger Things, The Pitt, and Pluribus.

If you're wondering, *Why do you care?*

[1] John Koblin, *Popularity of 'Heated Rivalry' Has Surprised Even TV Executives*, The New York Times (12 January 2026), https://archive.ph/HUBml.

Fandom is supposed to be fun. It's supposed to create, connect, transform and subvert. There is a fundamental human nature to it from which it can't (and shouldn't, for that matter) be separated from and that is at the core of fanfic, too, as part of its ultimate goal.

Undisclosed AI use harms human authors and fandom as a whole. It preys on people's insecurities—not writing fast enough or with enough polish, for instance—and contributes to the widespread pressure to produce, a lot and quickly, rather than create earnestly and joyfully.

On a wider note:

According to the United Nations Environment Programme, whilst the technology *is* being used to help address environmental emergencies, it is also at the epicentre of serious concerns regarding data centres' electronic waste, indirect gas emissions and consumption of drinkable water, as well as their dependence on unsustainably-sourced minerals.[2]

Additionally, companies everywhere are cutting thousands of jobs in favor of "AI efficiencies" ("*Silicon Valley's AI jobs purge is a warning for the world,*" The Telegraph, 29th June 2026). Companies are also pushing AI utilisation within their employees, scrutinized and assessed as part of performance reviews ("*Big companies are turning AI into a scoreboard—and everyone's being ranked*," Business Insider, 29th June 2026).

This is what we're looking at. However, back to the question at hand:

GenAI can do things well and quickly, and it is capable of producing writing that is superficially smooth and digestible. But fanfiction, like any other creative expression, should remain emotional, flawed, and irredeemably human. The proliferation of undisclosed AI in creative spaces limits opportunities for human expression, whether in writing or other mediums, to shine through.

As it becomes increasingly difficult to opt out of AI in our day-to-day lives, we fans should have the opportunity to decide for ourselves whether they want AI in our fan spaces.

This is the crux of it: the choice to interact with AI in fandom should ultimately be ours. And we should be able to make that choice with as much information—*truthful* information—as possible.

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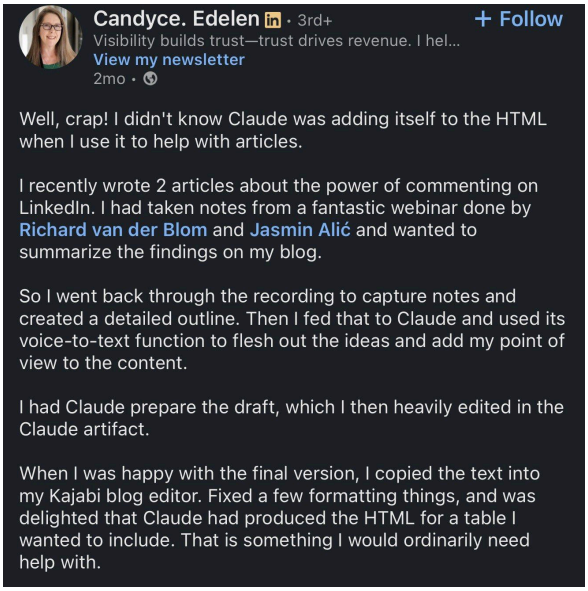
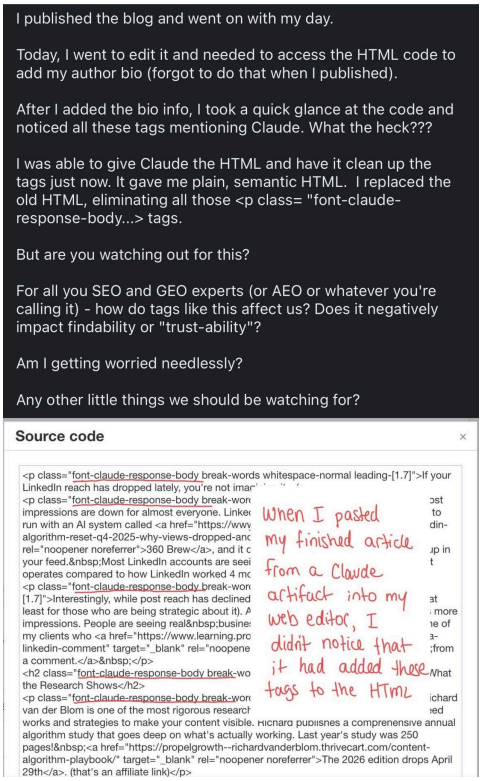
[2] UN Environment Programme, *AI has an environmental problem. Here's what the world can do about that*, Environment Under Review (21 September 2024), www.unep.org/news-and-stories/story/ai-has-environmental-problem-heres-what-world-can-do-about.

Claude Output Code on Ao3

We created this document to compile our research on a potential indicator of generative artificial intelligence (hereinafter referred to as "AI") usage found in the HTML source code of works published on AO3. The indicator is a fragment of code that appears in the rich text editor in AO3 when copied straight from Claude's LLM's output: "**font-claude-response-body**". A Claude user explained her experience in a post on LinkedIn, stating that after preparing a draft using Claude, she copied it into her blog editor and had to make sure to clean the "**font-claude-response-body**" tags from the text:





← This is not an isolated incident; for example, another user on LinkedIn noted that the same fragment of code appears when copying Claude-generated text into Word.

Methods and Materials

To access the source code of a fic on Ao3:

1. View the page's source code
    a. Desktop: within your browser window, Ctrl+U (Windows) or ⌘-Option-U (Mac)
        - Chrome: Right click→"Inspect" *or* right click→"View Source" (You can also go to the "three dots" menu at the top right of your browser window, click "More Tools," then "Developer Tools")
        - Firefox: Go to the "three lines" menu on the top right of your browser window, click "More Tools," then "Page Source"
    b. Mobile: when on the fic, edit the url and add "view-source:" before https://. Example: view-source:https://archiveofourown.org/works/123456789
2. Ctrl+F / Cmnd+F "claude"
    - Look for "**`font-claude-response-body`**"

The skin only works on a chapter-by-chapter basis; it is therefore best used with the "Entire Work" view.

To automatically determine whether the code fragment exists in a fic, we coded the following skin, which makes the AO3 screen a bright red color if **`font-claude-response-body`** is present.

```
#outer,
#main,
.userstuff,
.userstuff p,
.userstuff div {
     background: #ffffff !important;
     color: #000000 !important;
}
body:has(.userstuff p.font-claude-response-body) #outer,
body:has(.userstuff p.font-claude-response-body) #main,
body:has(.userstuff p.font-claude-response-body) .userstuff,
body:has(.userstuff p.font-claude-response-body) .userstuff p,
body:has(.userstuff p.font-claude-response-body) .userstuff div {
     background: #ff0000 !important;
     color: #ffffff !important;
}
```

We then tested the siteskin on works where we had already located the **`font-claude-response-body`** artifact by manually checking the HTML source code. We invite you to test the siteskin for yourself, which you can do by creating a new siteskin on AO3 and pasting this into the body of the text. This siteskin and the searching function described above do not rely on generative AI. These are simple searches of the HTML source code of publicly available AO3 works.

After filtering the "Game Changers | Heated Rivalry - All Media Types" tag, as well as other popular fandom tags (such as "Off Campus," "The Pitt," "Stranger Things (TV 2016)" and "Pluribus (2025)") by either Word Count or by Most Recent, we viewed the source code for every fic on each tag's first page. We then focused on the *Heated Rivalry* tag, expanding the search to almost every work over 1000 kudos and rumoured AI-assisted fics. Our research led us to the following conclusion:

When text is copied ***directly*** from Claude into AO3's editor, these formatting artifacts persist, and when viewing the source code of the fic on AO3, any reader can see the artifacts. Below are examples from other fandoms that demonstrate the *Heated Rivalry* AO3 tag is not the only fandom tag where the fragment of code exists:

- https://archiveofourown.org/works/78596761?view_full_work=true (Pluribus, "The Second Take" by oceansidedrive, 236 Claude artifacts as of 6/28/26)
- https://archiveofourown.org/works/84947271/chapters/224243531 (Off-Campus, "Dirty Little Secret" by SignoraScuderia, 12 Claude artifacts as of 6/29/26)
- https://archiveofourown.org/works/79261491?view_full_work=true (Stranger Things, "Super Soaker" by wheezingwheeler, 532 Claude artifacts as of 6/28/26)
- https://archiveofourown.org/works/81457401?view_full_work=true (The Pitt, "The Wound (is the place where the light enters you)" by lieutenanttrouble, 9 Claude artifacts as of 6/29/26)

In our appendix are works on AO3 we have discovered that contain the Claude fragment, sorted alphabetically by username. For some authors, the fragment appears throughout multiple works. The screenshots are our findings as of June 29, 2026.

The existence of the foregoing code fragments is proof of AI / Claude usage for specific sentences and paragraphs; these fragments do not prove that a writer used AI to create the entire work. The absence of this code, whether in the remainder of the fic in question and/or in other works, **is not indicative** of a lack of AI usage.

The presence of this code is a positive indicator, not a negative. It is plausible (and perhaps more likely) that many AI users copy and paste their Claude outputs into a text editor (Word, Google Docs, Notes, etc.) before pasting into AO3 or remove these artifacts through other means. It is also possible that other LLM outputs contain other indicators of AI usage not discussed here.

In addition, numerous users have admitted to usage of AI or left AI chat outputs in posted works, revealing that they used AI tools in the creation of the works, but this code artifact was not present. Accordingly, please consider all examples here as only a specifically identifiable subset of *Heated Rivalry* fics created with the assistance of generative AI.

In this section, we have compiled our findings regarding the presence of a fragment of HTML code found in the source code for Ao3 fics indicating the use of Claude. Across various fandom tag pages (the first page of each fandom tag sorted by Word Count), we found the code fragment time and time again. We only focused on the *Heated Rivalry* fandom tag because of our mutual interest in the *Heated Rivalry* fanfiction community.

Though we concede that we haven't undertaken statistical analysis, our findings indicate that Claude use in fanfiction uploaded to Ao3 is becoming commonplace. Further research is encouraged to uncover the particular code fragments left in by Gemini, ChatGPT, Grok, and other LLMs, to the extent they exist and persist when copied into AO3's editor. We also welcome peer review by third parties for accuracy and other discoveries.

Our intention is not to create an environment of mistrust or accuse particular users; after discovering the code fragment and its possible presence in AO3 fics, we proceeded with the above study to investigate the phenomenon as objectively as we could. Thank you for reading.

If you are someone who has used Claude or another LLM to write your fanfiction, we respectfully ask that you tag your work as "AI assisted" or "AI generated."

So what comes next?

We have compiled the facts as best we could and as comprehensively as we could within the time we had. All of this was in the interest of preserving the humanity and authenticity of fan spaces.

Do not ostracize, harass, or bully any of the people named in this document. **WE DO NOT ENDORSE THIS.**

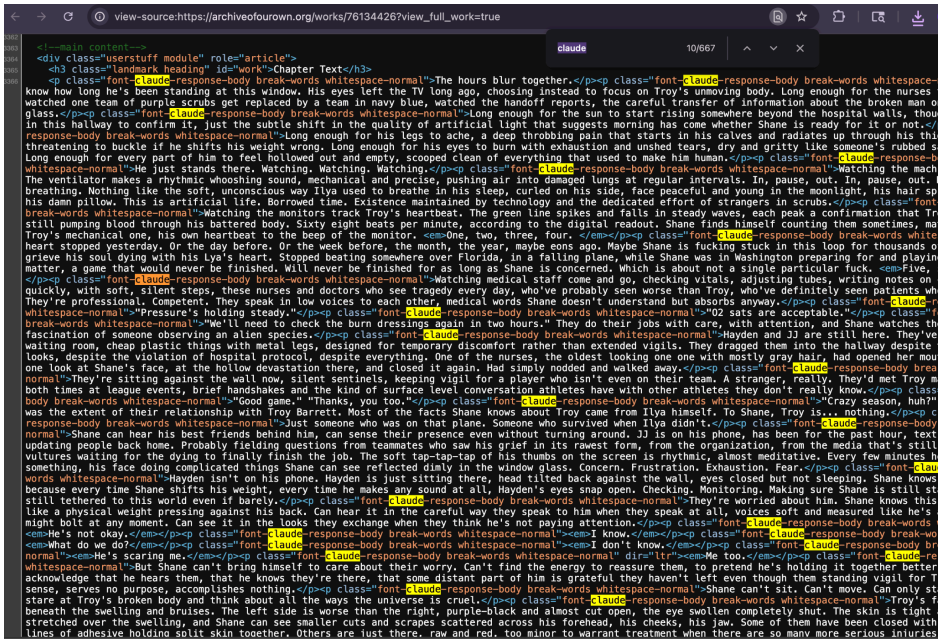
Similarly, we are **NOT** asking for the removal of any of these works from the Archive. Considering the human and environmental ethical issues around Generative AI, we are asking for the proper tagging so that all us fans can make informed decisions with as much transparency as possible.

Fandom is a uniquely connective, collaborative space. It thrives on the human element and the creative spark which drives it and feeds off it. If we unknowingly allow AI to corrupt these spaces, what will be left of them?

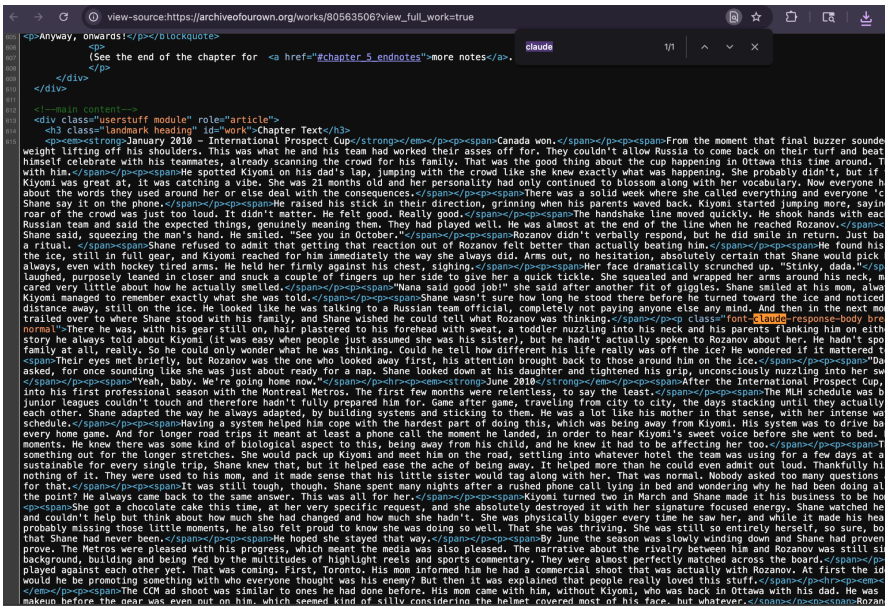
APPENDIX

For reference: HTML/epub/PDFs of all fics listed in this document are saved here, updated as of 29 June 2026: https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/136ADl_CC_n8BVHj693fnjDphDUP6gmge?usp=drive_link

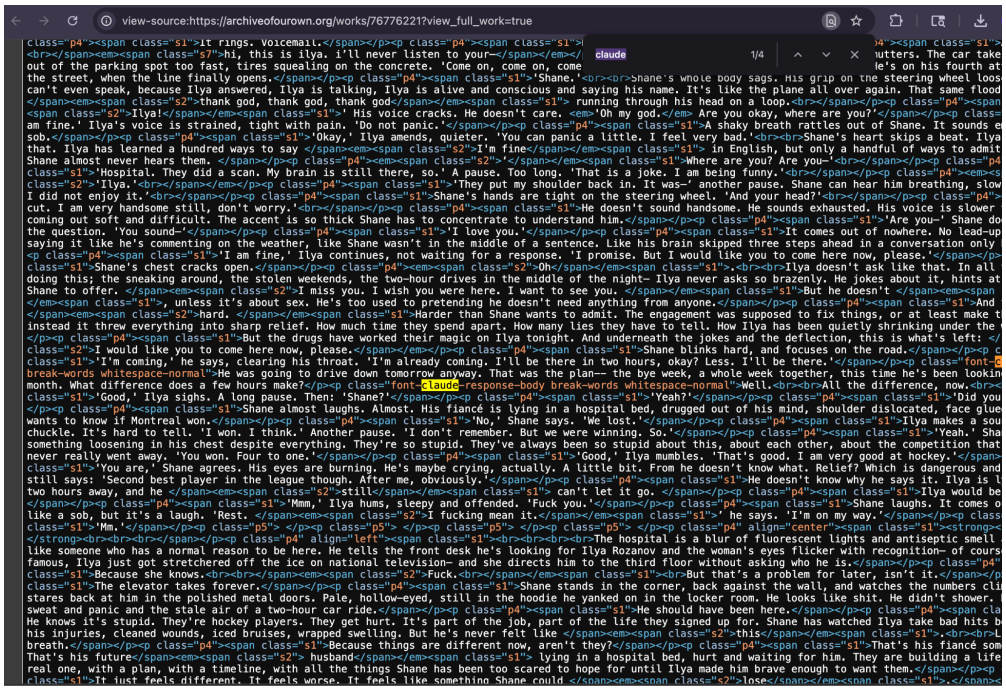
Amaretta, "Half a forever (I buried my heart with you)"
1,256 kudos, 58,118 hits, 234,201 words (667 instances)



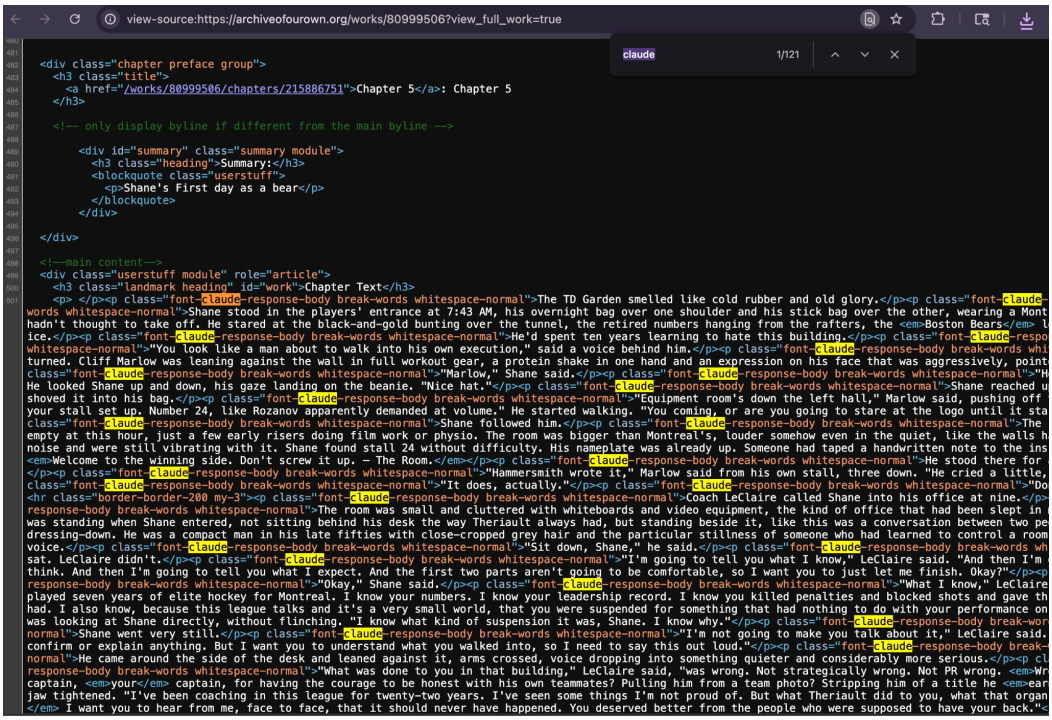
atemonai, "Offside"
3,105 kudos, 114,244 hits, 110,917 words (1 instance)



dandelionclub, “[so much of living is being unknown]”
5,676 kudos, 97,421 hits, 53,332 words (4 instances)

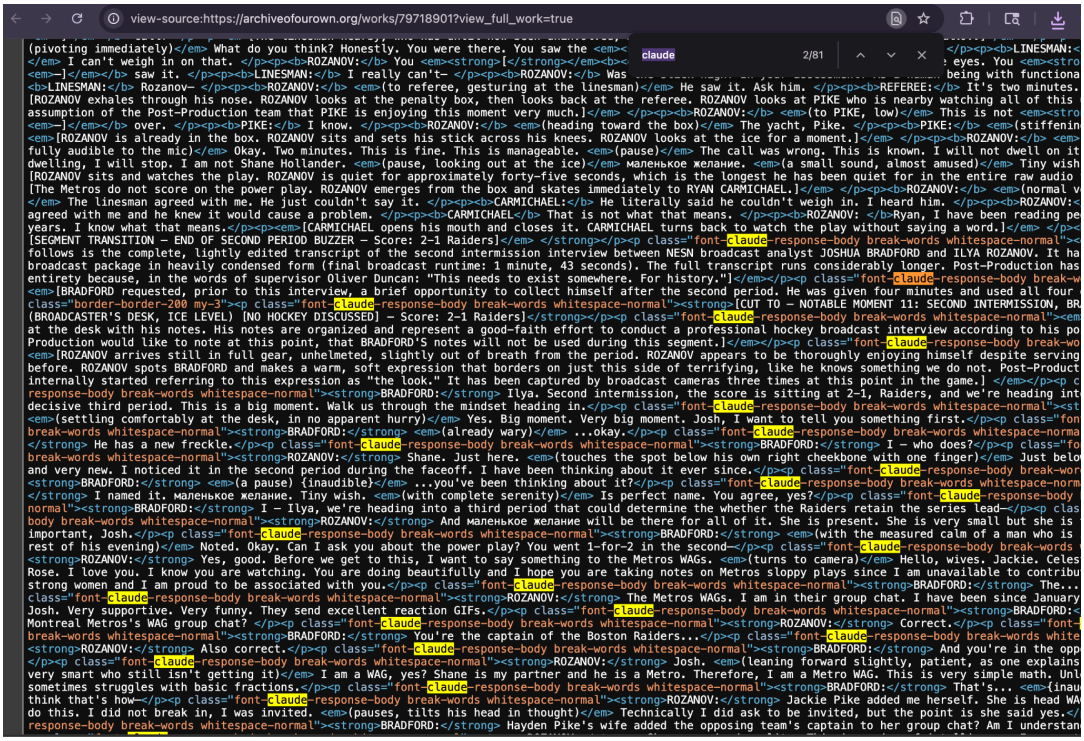


DropTheLaur, “[The weight we carry]”
1,061 kudos, 17,179 hits, 12,939 words (121 instances)



flashytonystark, “boston lily & associates”

7,517 kudos, 249,979 hits, 93,504 words (81 instances)

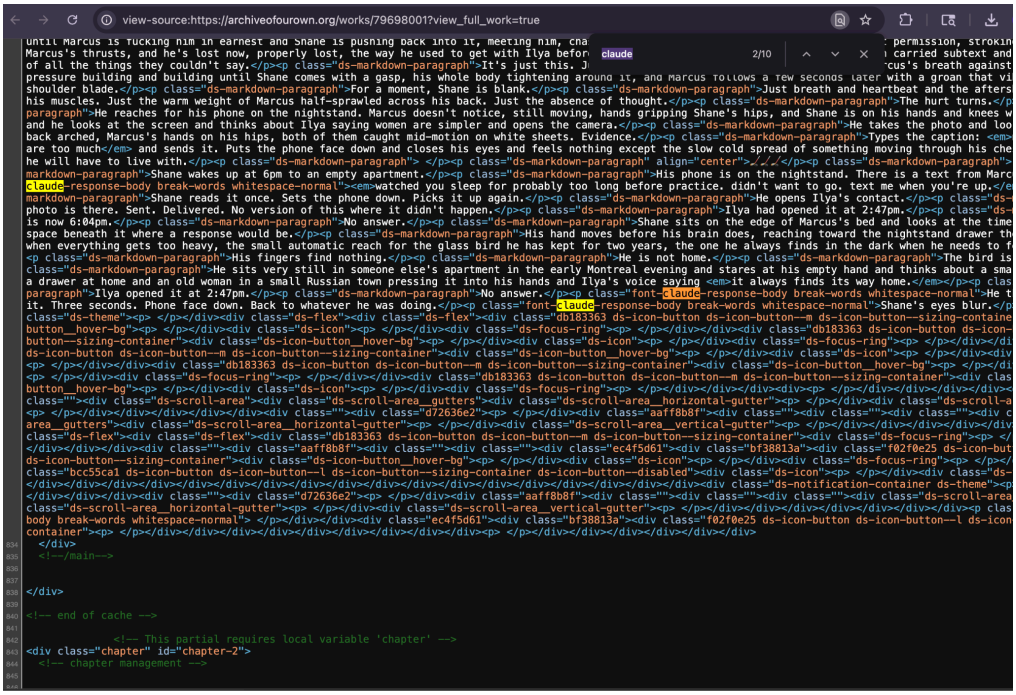


frozenmorningdew, “hanging by a moment”

10,284 kudos, 467,825 hits, 187,083 words (122 instances)

honeythief_bug, “Cross Check”

3,675 kudos, 159,823 hits, 76,479 words (10 instances)



just_chemicals, “Three Things I Don’t Play About”

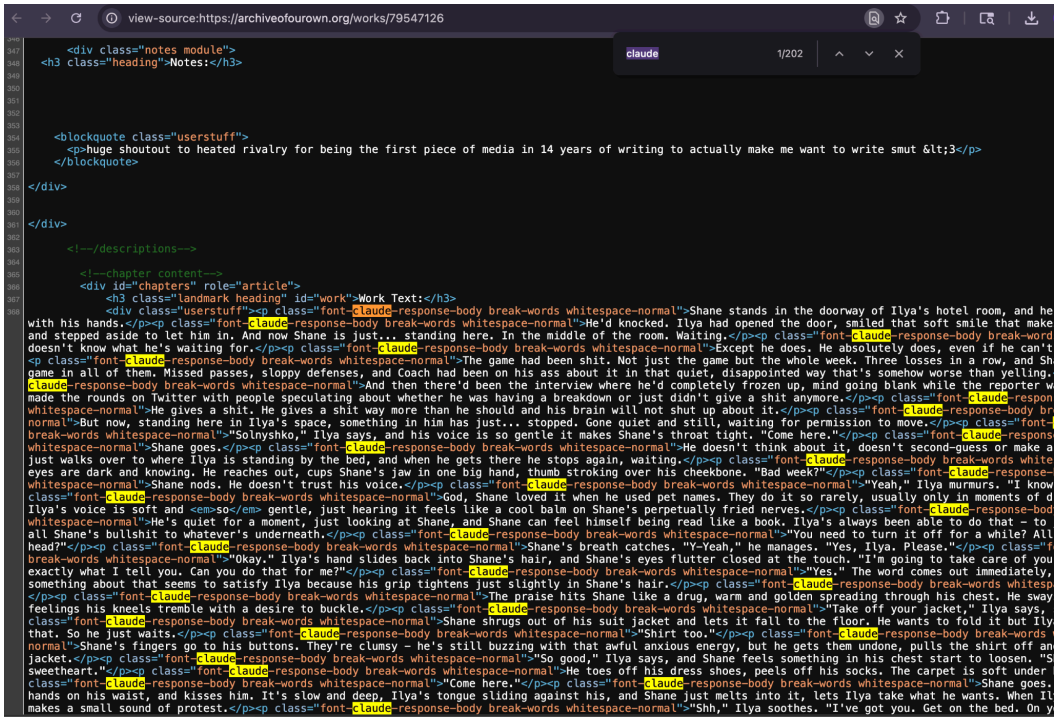
6,056 kudos, 40,743 hits, 11,303 words (11 instances)

just_chemicals, “The Long Walk Home”

2,395 kudos, 20,355 hits, 6,450 words (283 instances)

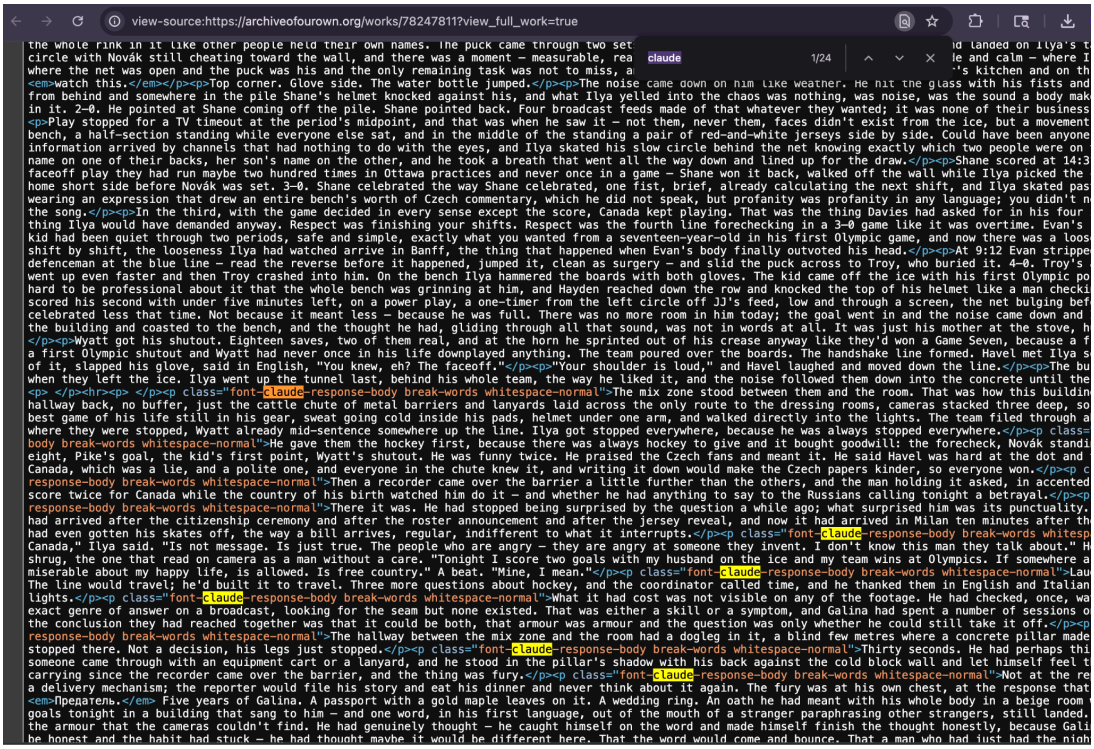
just_chemicals, “Trust Fall”

1,119 kudos, 15,847 hits, 4,663 words (202 instances)



Kiyominox, “The Weight of Red and White”

837 kudos, 31,001 hits, 78,888 words (24 instances)

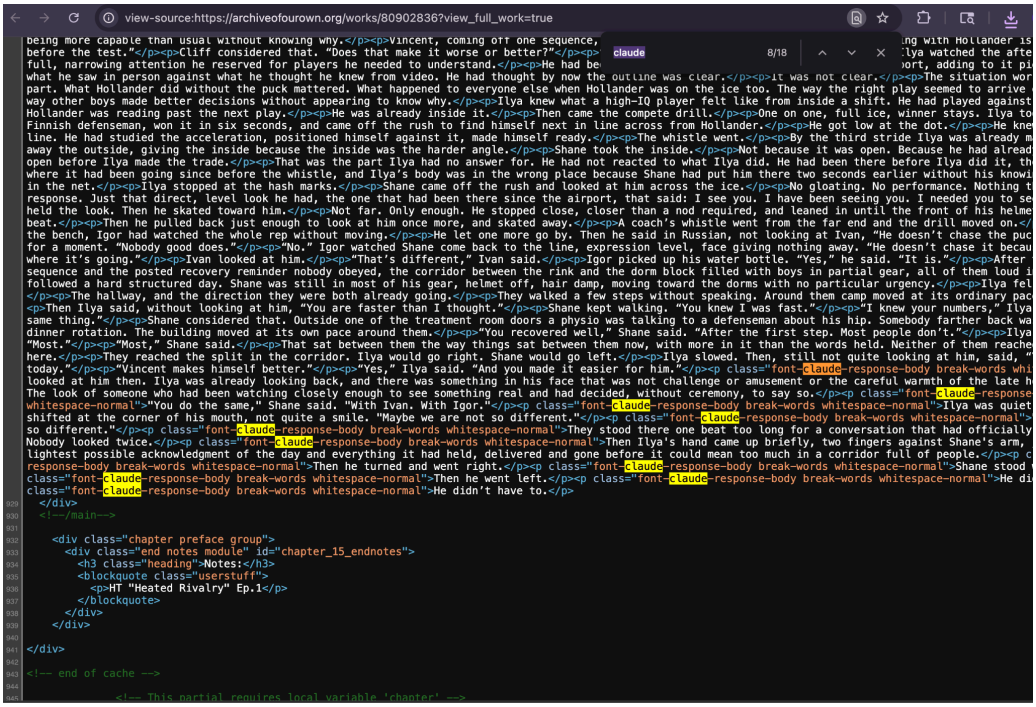


Little_Flower43, “Atypical Russian Alpha”

2,975 kudos, 79,665 hits, 74,256 words (1,300+ instances)

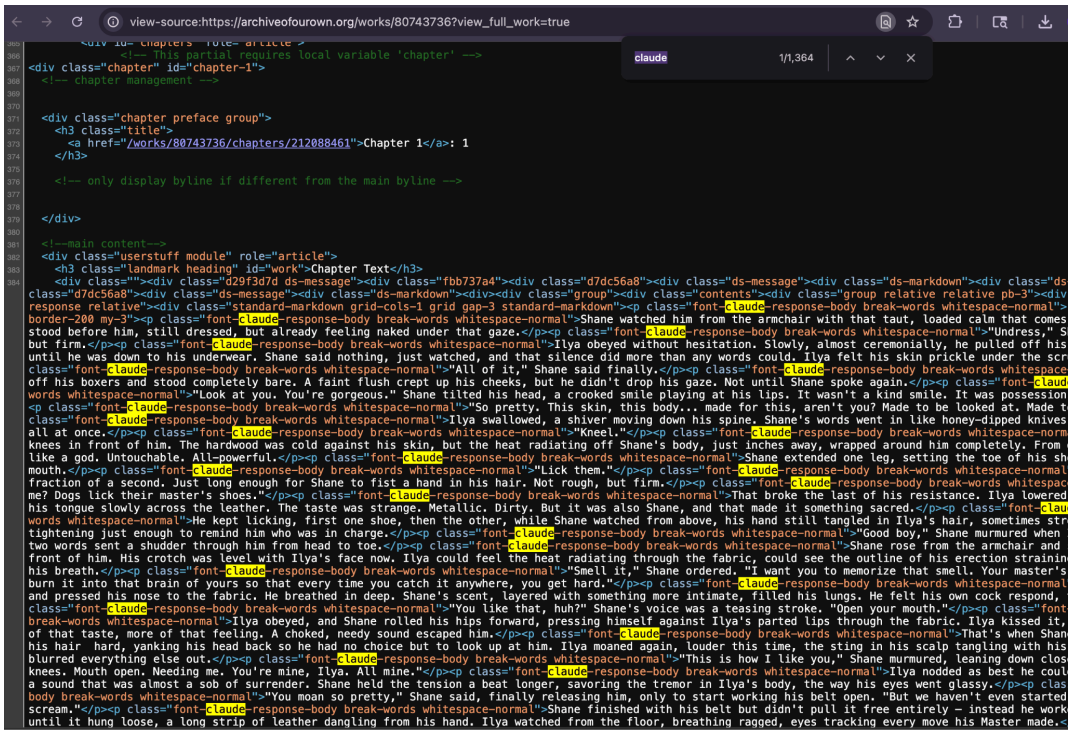
LK1221, “The Summer Before”

728 kudos, 28,997 hits, 107,868 words (18 instances)



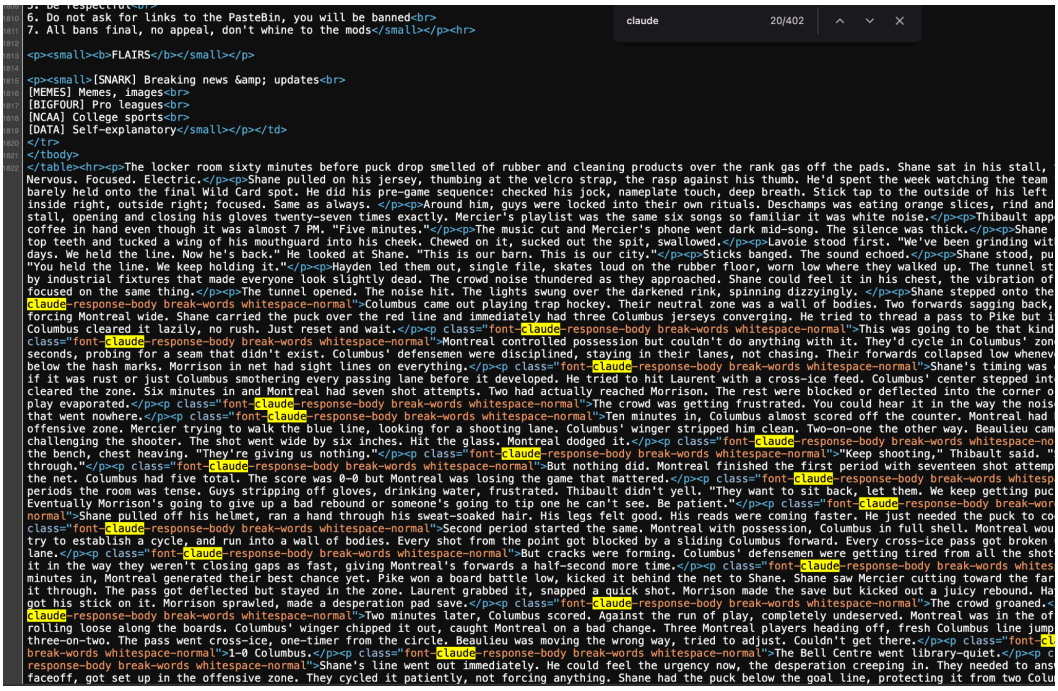
Lost_childe (tamy_blue), tamy_blue, “Five Hours”

606 kudos, 22,255 hits, 40,562 words (1,364 instances)



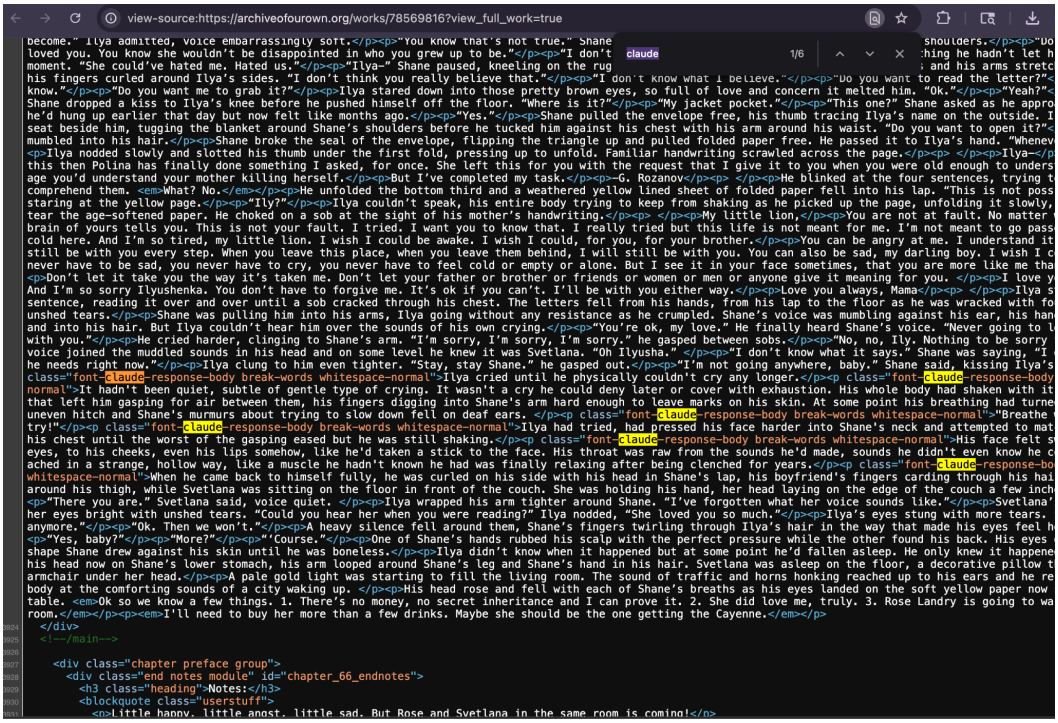
mashawisotsky, “Halt and Catch Fire” (HTML download only)

(*Note*: This fic is currently in a hidden collection. A previously downloaded copy contains 402 instances of “Claude.”)



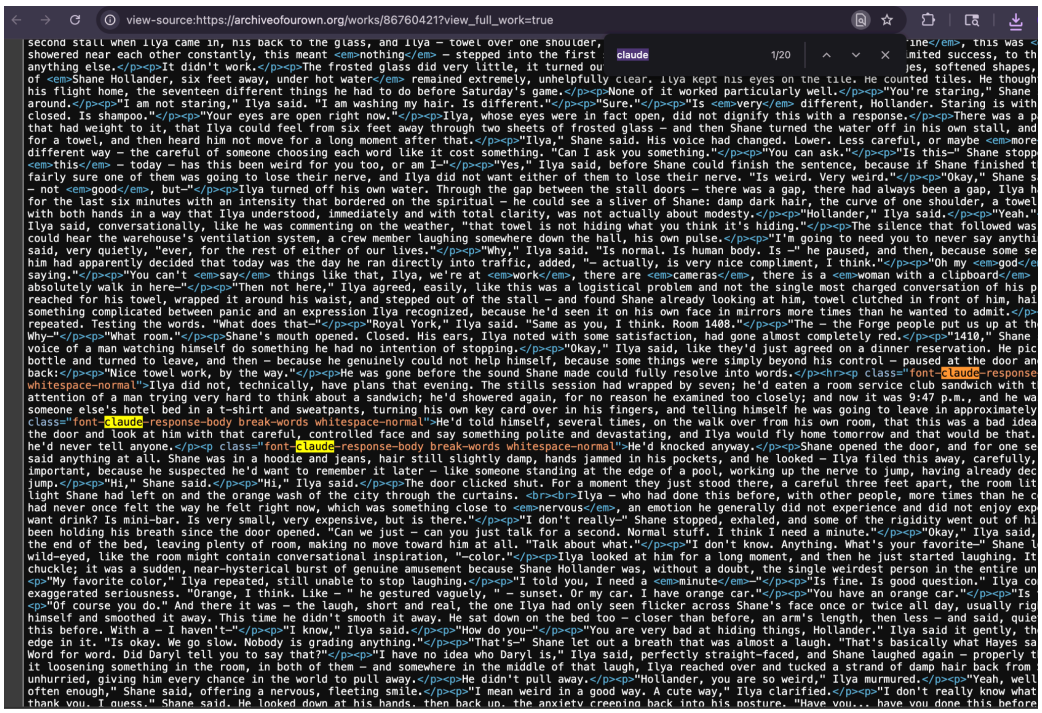
northrow, “A Reel”

10,161 kudos, 632,373 hits, 263,627 words (6 instances)



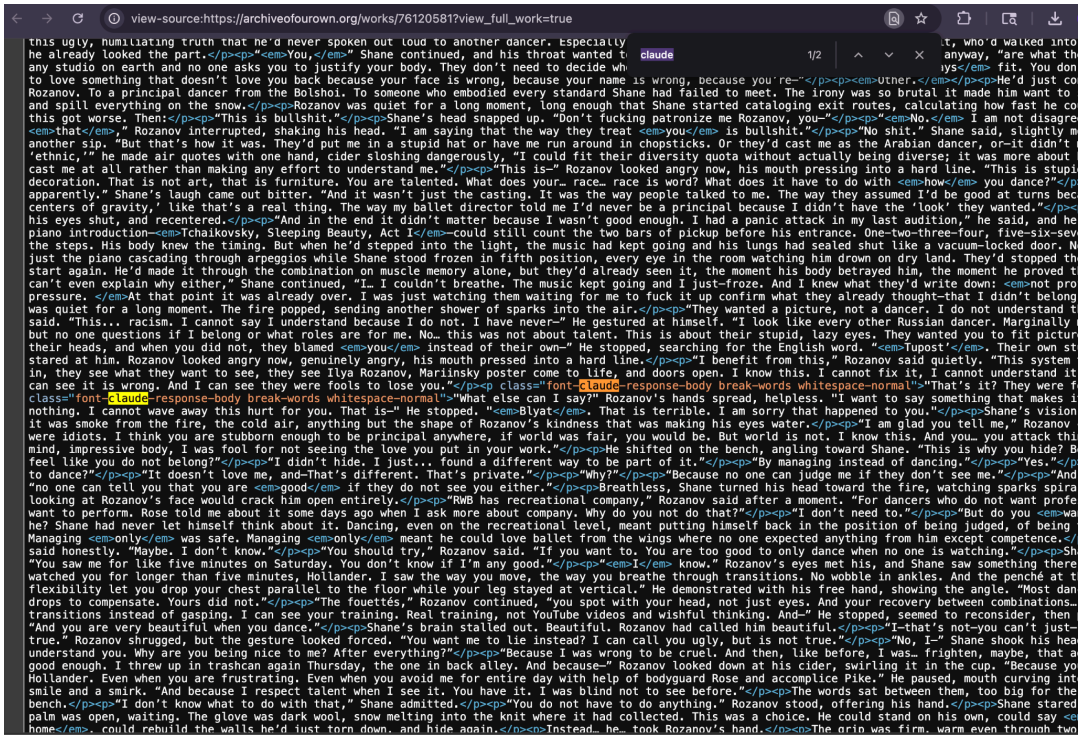
Ntchk, “Hold Your Breath”

70 kudos, 2,159 hits, 90,290 words (20 instances)



OpalApparition, “Nutcracker!”

11,368 kudos, 251,835 hits, 101,272 words (2 instances)



opalgod, “The Ottawa Girl”

535 kudos, 12,116 hits, 84,349 words (11 instances)

orphan_account, “Impact”

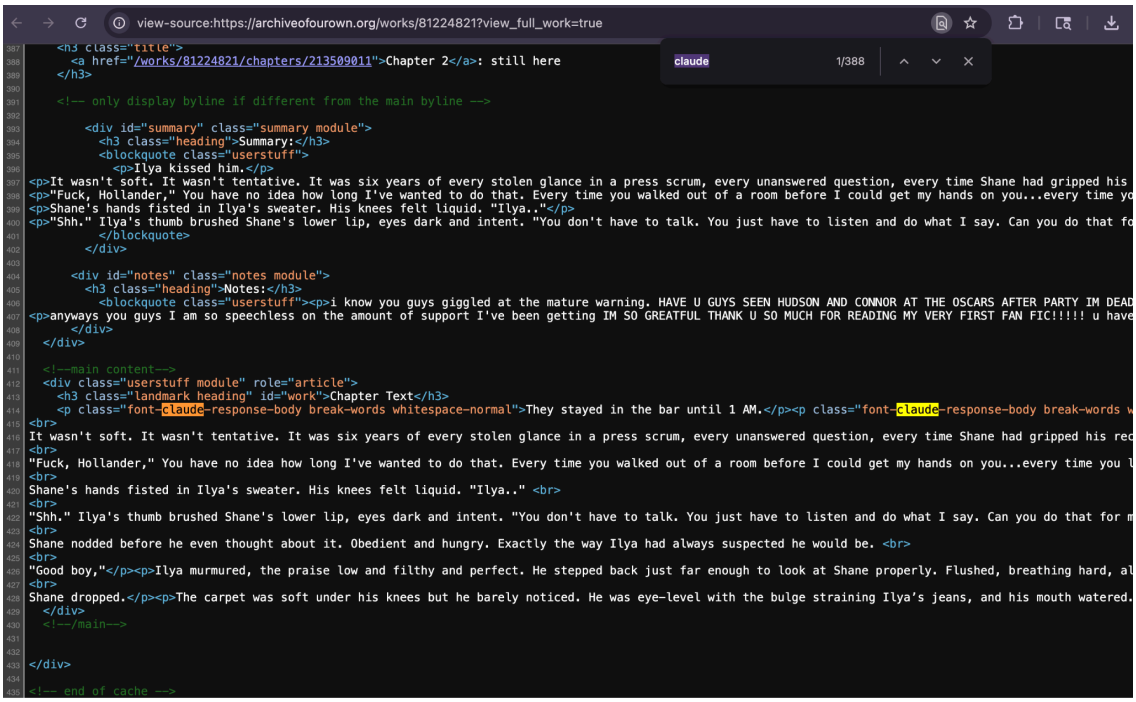
3,744 kudos, 70,846 hits, 52,842 words (443 instances)

pic_in_blue, “Birds!”

1,500 kudos, 13,026 hits, 20,029 words (7 instances)

red_bull_enthusiast, “Off The Record, On You”

3,320 kudos, 62,432 hits, 16,485 words (388 instances)

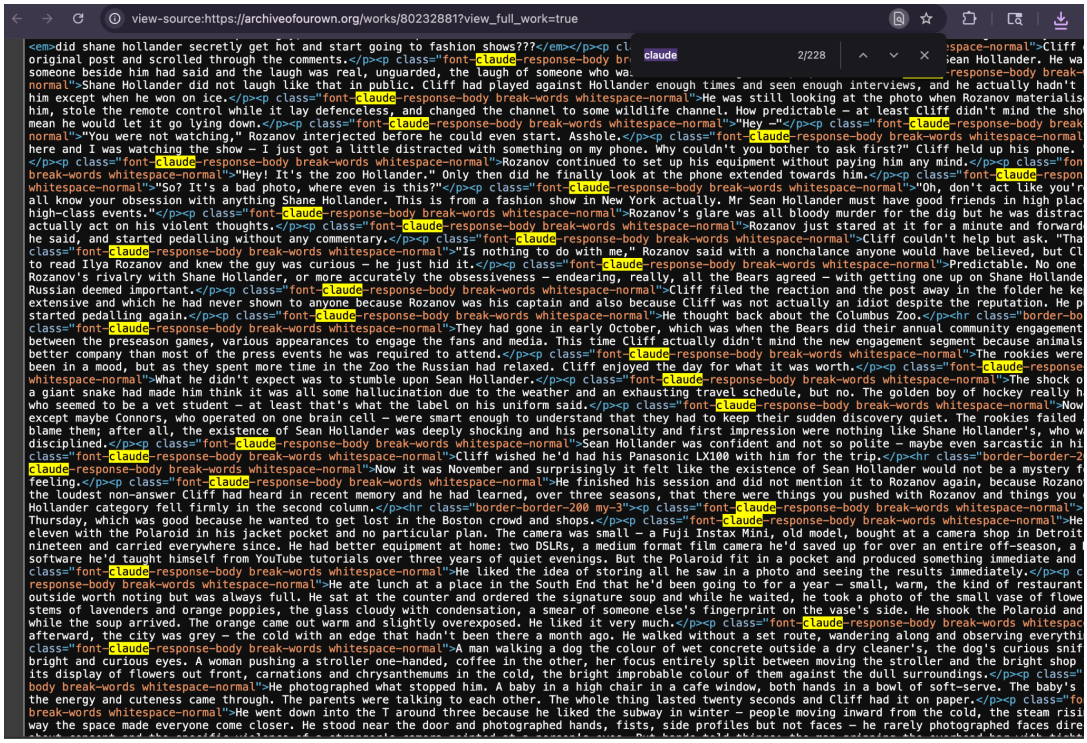


red_bull_enthusiast, [“the last puck drop”]

589 kudos, 7,150 hits, 6,325 words (130 instances)

rose_alwar_31, “[I’m jealous of the morning sun that gets to see you first.]”

605 kudos, 20,456 hits, 138,690 words (228 instances)

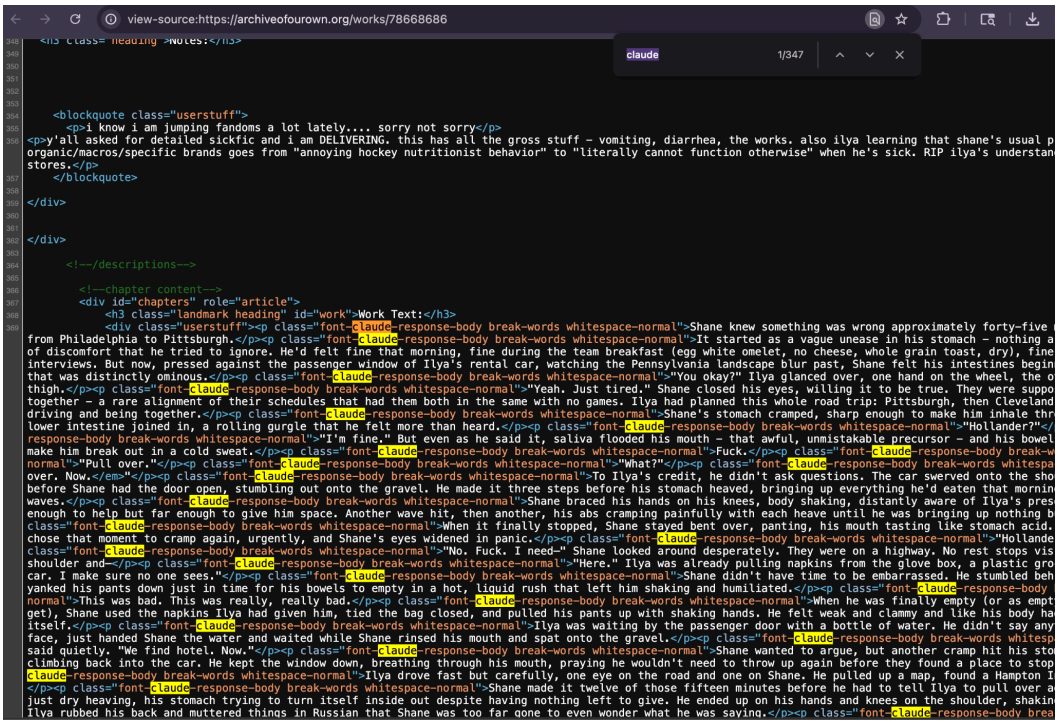


roxykris, “the quiet things”

1,473 kudos, 51,767 hits, 60,943 words (over 1,100 instances)

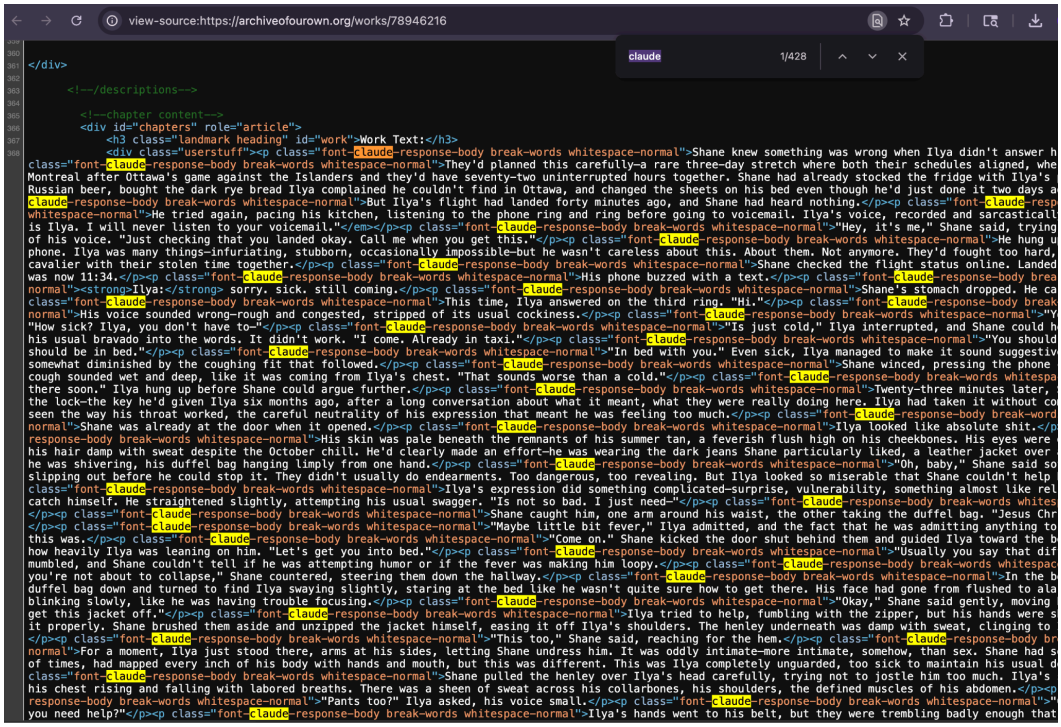
roxykris, “the right brand of care”

1,164 kudos, 16,352 hits, 7,077 words (347 instances)



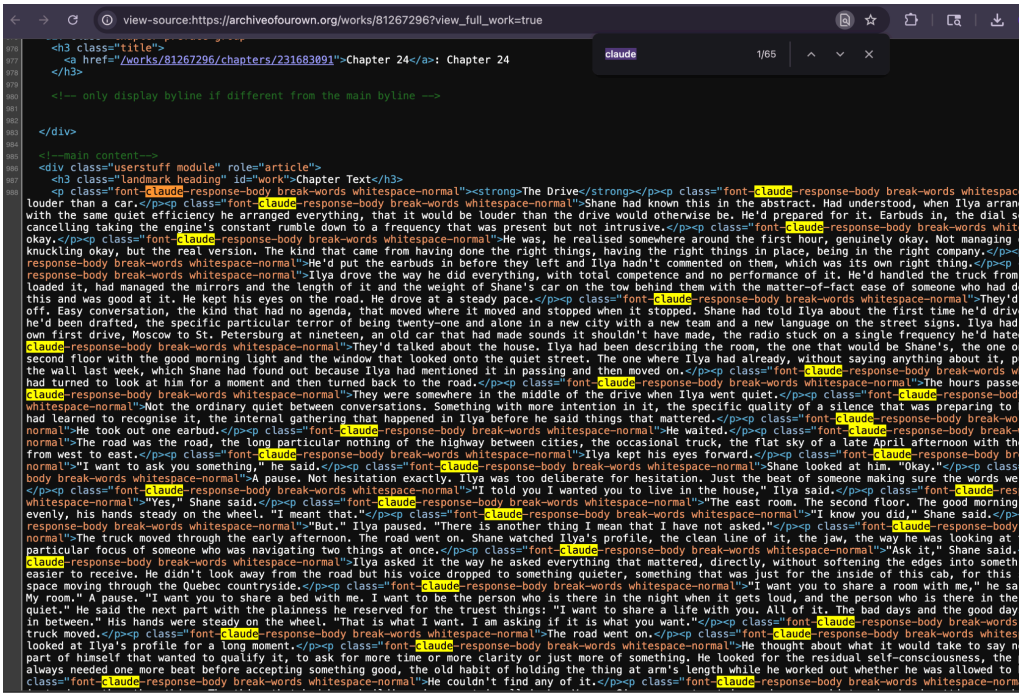
roxykris, “when the walls come down”

3,359 kudos, 45,685 hits, 7,991 words (428 instances)



sammie4282003, “Paying Attention”

2,141 kudos, 46,330 hits, 67,077 words (65 instances)

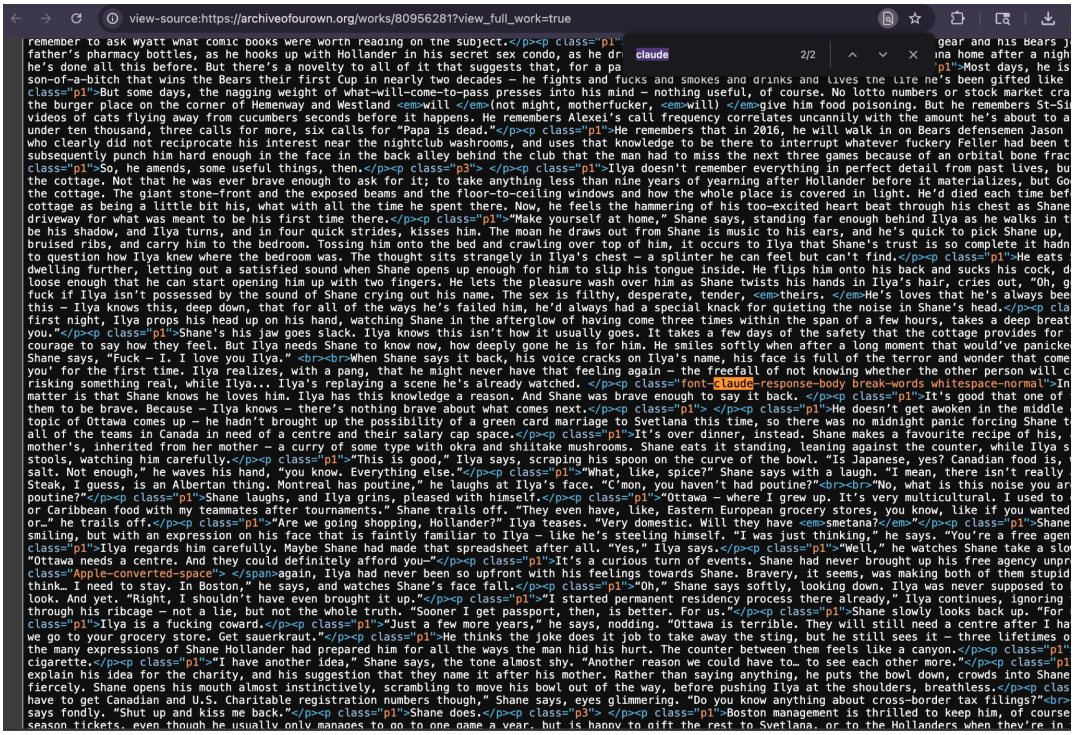


Scorp112, “What Might Have Been”

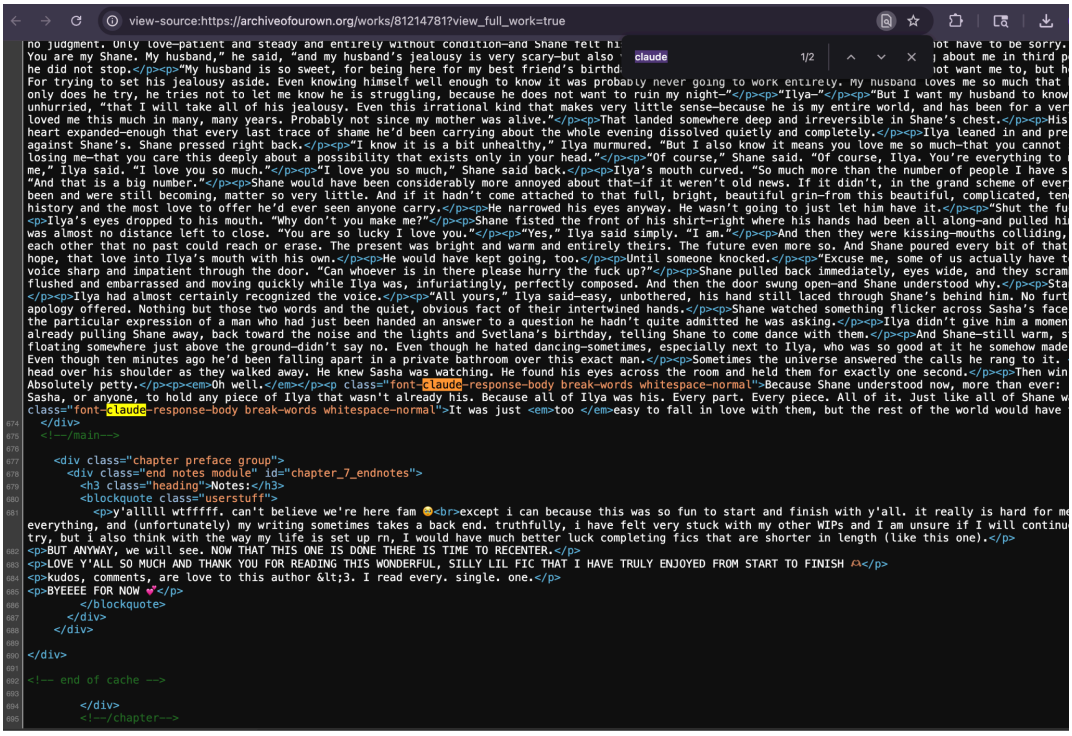
2,496 kudos, 52,171 hits, 35,465 words (110 instances)

sleepingintheculdesac, “if you’re scared of wolves”

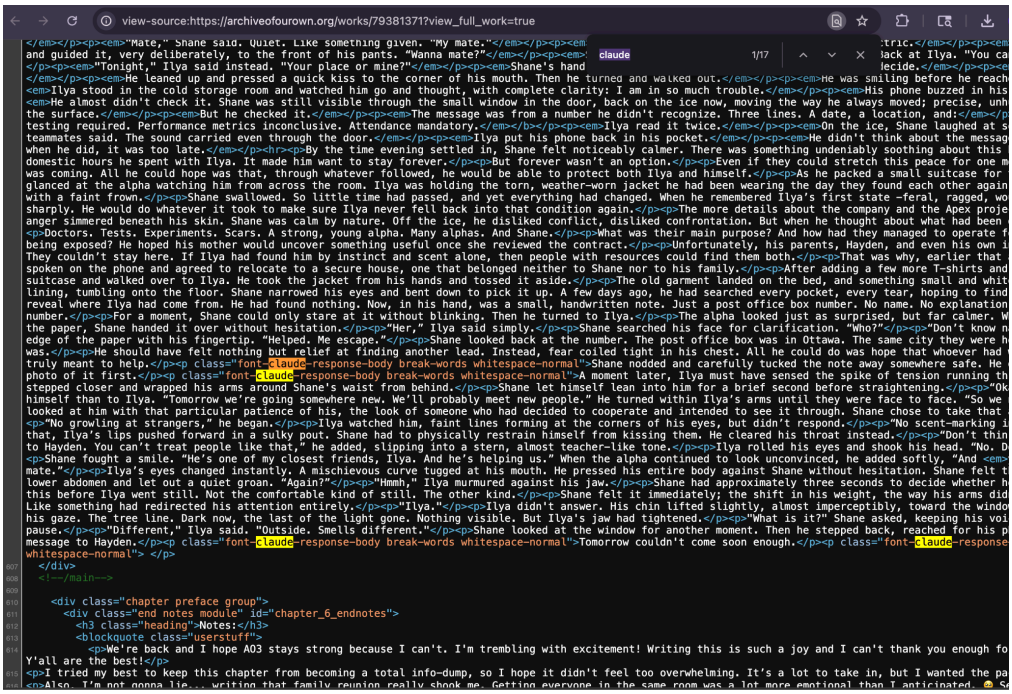
1,440 kudos, 28,994 hits, 92,100 words (2 instances)



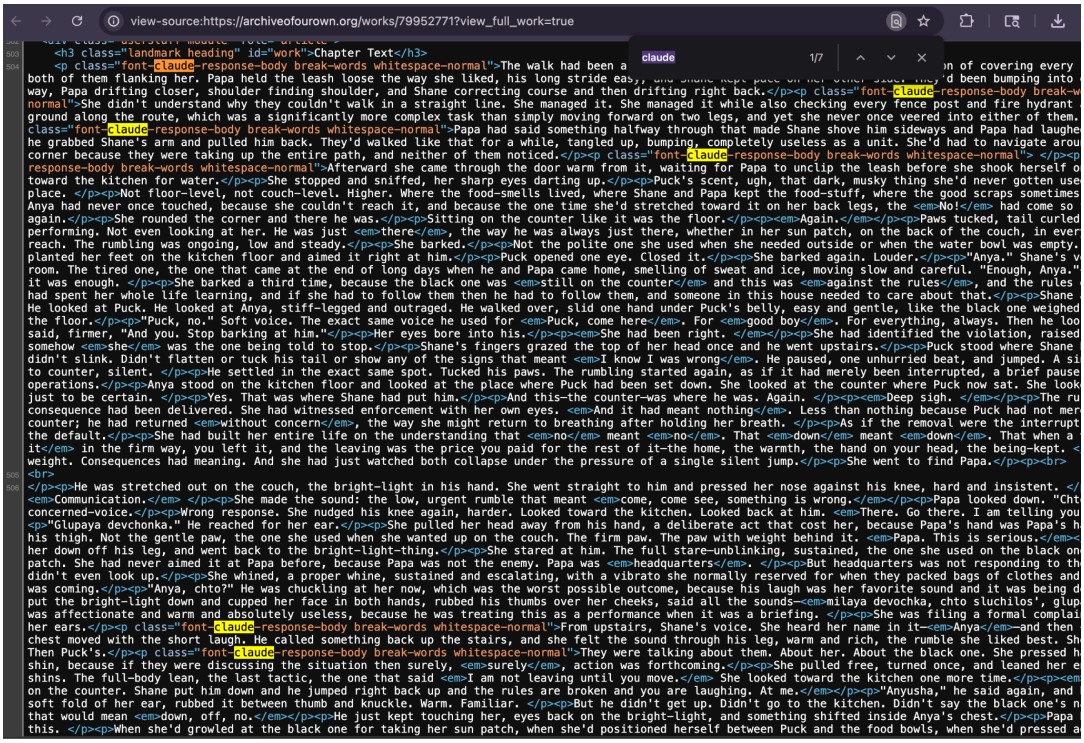
SPRINGINGintoaction (sailingtheLarryship), “[It’s So Easy to Fall In Love with Shane Hollander](#)”
7,080 kudos, 149,826 hits, 48,992 words (2 instances)



stillnotimpressed, “[Scentbound](#)”
2,145 kudos, 55,521 hits, 83,779 words (17 instances)



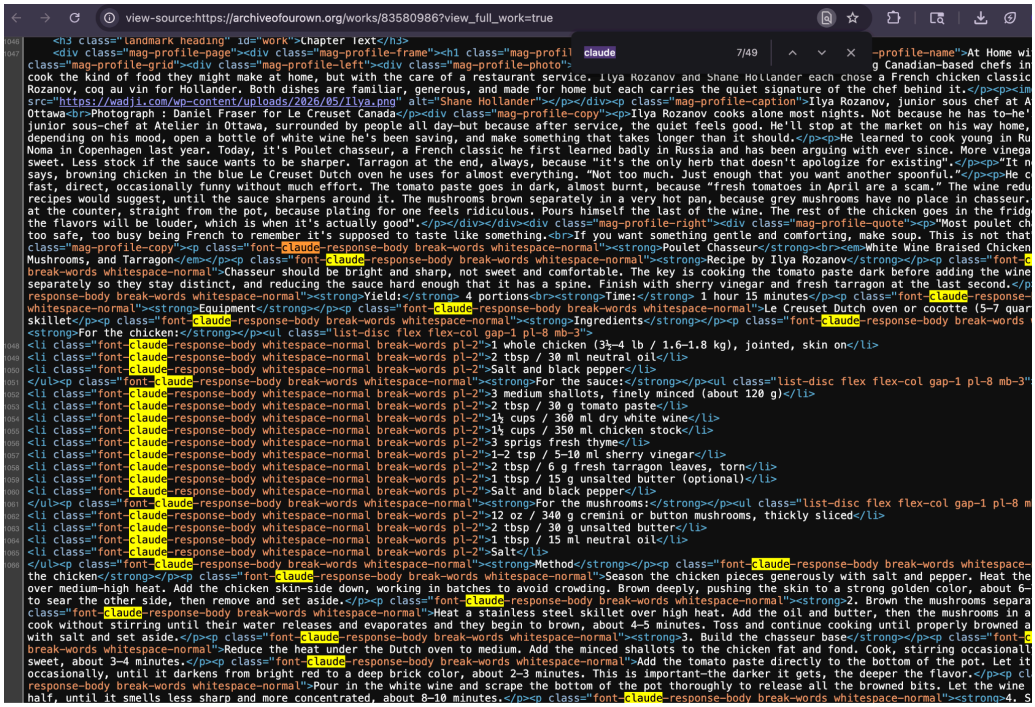
sullacat, “[The Canine Defense Doctrine (In Your Arms I’d Start a War)](#)”
1,285 kudos, 12,992 hits, 15,035 words (7 instances)



TheLoonlyProfessor, “[Revise and Resubmit](#)”
459 kudos, 18,828 hits, 70,773 words (86 instances)

Thelibrarian (Wadjilicious), “[the recipe for staying](#)”

53 kudos, 885 hits, 6,455 words (49 instances)

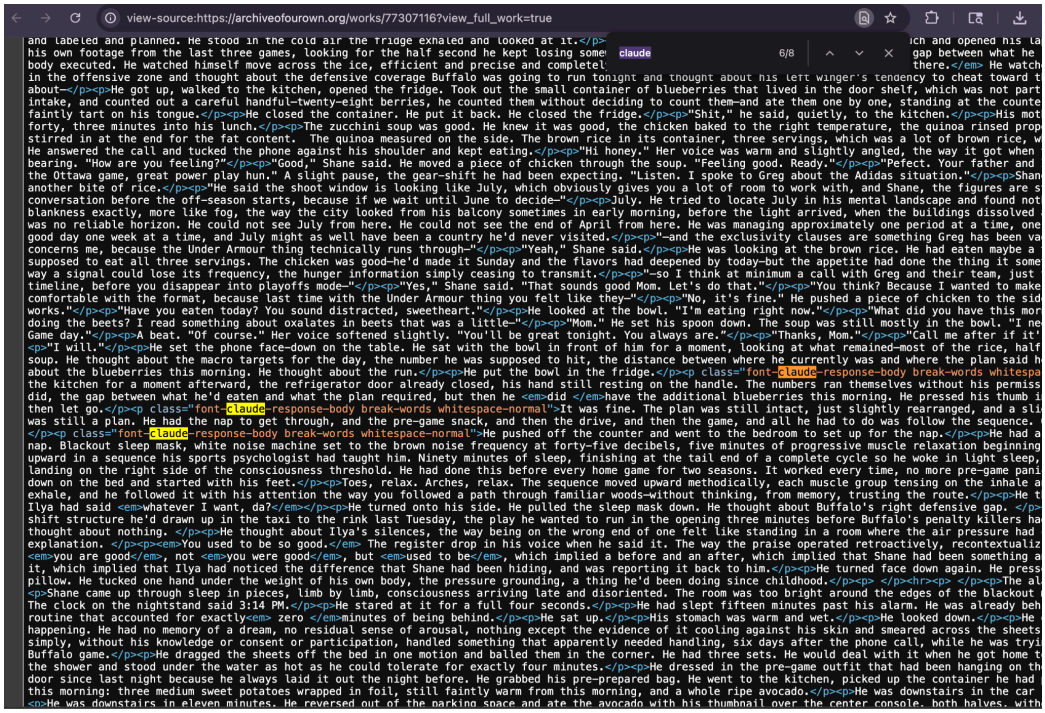


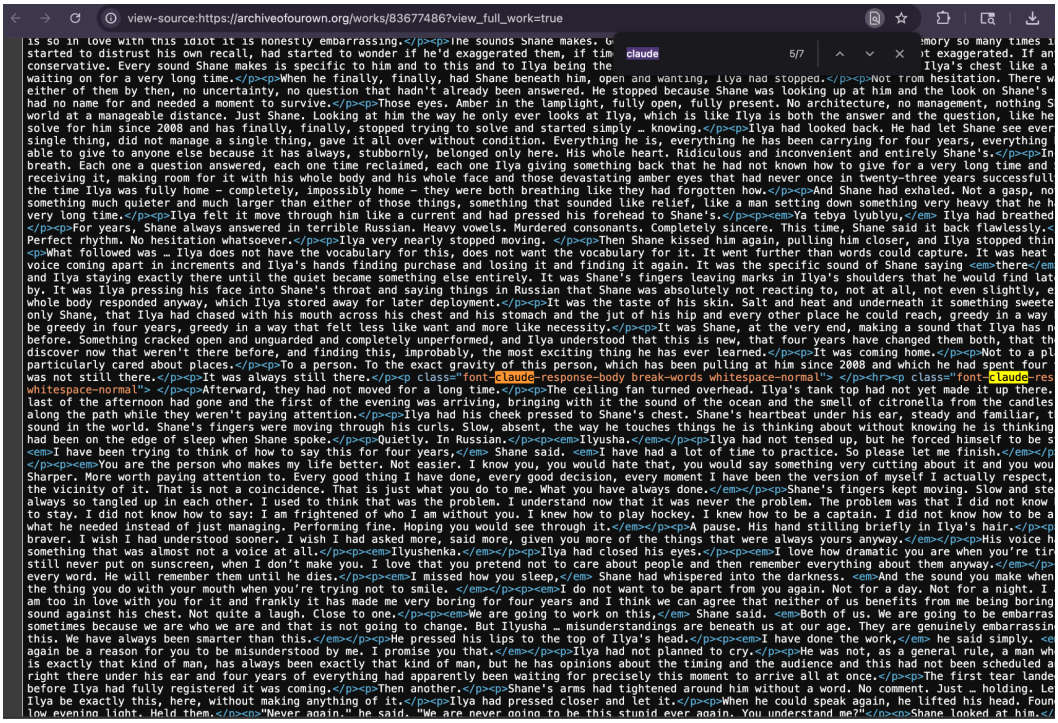
Thelibrarian (Wadjilicious), “[To live in hearts we leave behind](#)”

119 kudos, 1,147 hits, 3,065 words (3 instances)

unseemlyndisturbed, “Lightweight canadian”

1,403 kudos, 89,479 hits, 269,193 words (8 instances)



Zavia, “Just Another Day In Paradise” (*which also includes an undeniably AI-generated cover image*)

1,589 kudos, 56,389 hits, 136,871 words (7 instances)